

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

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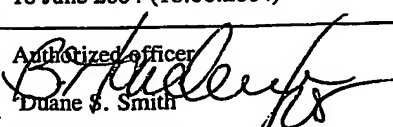
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INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 325.0194PCT	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/US03/21194	International filing date (day/month/year) 03 July 2003 (03.07.2003)	Priority date (day/month/year) 03 July 2002 (03.07.2002)
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC IPC(7): B01D 53/14 and US Cl.: 96/242; 95/168,181,183,235,236; 423/228,229		
Applicant FLUOR CORPORATION		
<p>1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.</p> <p>2. This REPORT consists of a total of <u>3</u> sheets, including this cover sheet.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e., sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).</p> <p>These annexes consist of a total of <u>3</u> sheets.</p>		
<p>3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:</p> <p>I <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Basis of the report</p> <p>II <input type="checkbox"/> Priority</p> <p>III <input type="checkbox"/> Non-establishment of report with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability</p> <p>IV <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of unity of invention</p> <p>V <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement</p> <p>VI <input type="checkbox"/> Certain documents cited</p> <p>VII <input type="checkbox"/> Certain defects in the international application</p> <p>VIII <input type="checkbox"/> Certain observations on the international application</p>		
Date of submission of the demand 05 February 2004 (05.02.2004)	Date of completion of this report 18 June 2004 (18.06.2004)	
Name and mailing address of the IPEA/US Mail Stop PCT, Attn: IPEA/US Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 Facsimile No. (703) 305-3230	Authorized officer  Duane S. Smith Telephone No. 571-272-0987	

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US03/21194

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the elements of the international application:*

☐ the international application as originally filed.☒ the description:

pages 1-15 as originally filed

pages NONE, filed with the demand

pages NONE, filed with the letter of _____.

☒ the claims:

pages NONE, as originally filed

pages NONE, as amended (together with any statement) under Article 19

pages NONE, filed with the demand

pages 16-18, filed with the letter of 27 April 2004 (27.04.2004)

☒ the drawings:

pages 1-4, as originally filed

pages NONE, filed with the demand

pages NONE, filed with the letter of _____.

☐ the sequence listing part of the description:

pages NONE, as originally filed

pages NONE, filed with the demand

pages NONE, filed with the letter of _____.

2. With regard to the language, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language _____ which is:

☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).☐ the language of the translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

☐ contained in the international application in printed form.☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.4. ☒ The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:☒ the description, pages NONE☒ the claims, Nos. 2☒ the drawings, sheets/fig NONE5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).**

* Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17).

** Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US03/21194**V. Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement****1. STATEMENT**

Novelty (N)	Claims <u>1, 3-20</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO
Inventive Step (IS)	Claims <u>1,3-20</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO
Industrial Applicability (IA)	Claims <u>1-20</u>	YES
	Claims <u>NONE</u>	NO

2. CITATIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

Claims 1,3-20 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(2)-(3), because the prior art does not teach or fairly suggest the claimed features as disclosed in instant claims 1 of a plant having a absorber that removes an acid gas from a feed gas receiving a lean solvent and a semi-lean solvent, thereby producing a semi-rich solvent and a rich solvent; a first regenerator that receives a first portion of the rich solvent thereby producing the lean solvent that is fed to the absorber and a first regenerator overhead; a second regenerator that receives a second portion of the rich solvent, thereby producing the semi-lean solvent that is fed to the absorber and second regenerator overhead; wherein the second portion of the rich solvent is preheated in a heat exchanger against the lean solvent from the first regenerator; and wherein the second regenerator overhead and the semi-lean solvent that is fed to the absorber are substantially produced from the second portion of the rich solvent.

Claims 1-20 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(4), and thus the plant for removing acid gases from a feed gas has industrial applicability because the subject matter claimed can be made or used in industry.